

## **Safe Recruitment**

At Downside we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure that all people working looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children are suitable.

We follow this procedure each and every time we recruit a new member of staff to join our team.

### **Legal requirements**

- We abide by all legal requirements relating to safe recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying regulations including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2021
- We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks; and abide by the employer's responsibilities relating to informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of their staff, whether this member of staff has left the preschool or is still under investigation. Please refer to the child protection/safeguarding policy for further information.

### **Advertising**

- We use reputable newspapers, websites and the local job centre and central Bedfordshire recruitment to advertise for any vacancies
- We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of our equal opportunities policy and our safe recruitment procedures; including an enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references for every new employee.

### **Interview stage**

- We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set specification and ensure all applicants receive correspondence regardless of whether they are successful in reaching the interview stage or not
- All shortlisted candidates will receive a job description, a person specification, and a request for identification to be brought to the interview
- The manager will decide the most appropriate people for the interview panel. There will be at least two people involved and both are involved in the overall decision making
- At the start of each interview all candidates' identities will be checked using, for example, their passport and/or photocard driving licence. All candidates will be required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK. The interview will also cover any gaps in the candidate's employment history
- All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child's development and their understanding of the legal frameworks applied to childcare and used in the preschool. The questions will be value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the preschool with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care

- Candidates will be given a score for their answers including a score for their individual experience and qualifications
- Every shortlisted candidate will be asked to take part in a supervised practical exercise which will involve spending time in the preschool interacting with the children, staff and where appropriate parents
- The manager and deputy will then select the most suitable person for this position based on these scores and their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework as well as the needs of the preschool
- Every candidate will receive communication from the preschool stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback.

### **Starting work**

- The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to at least two references from previous employment or, in the case of a newly qualified student, their tutor and a personal or professional reference. These references will be taken up BEFORE employment commences. This may be verbal initially and then followed up with a written reference, which will form part of their personnel file
- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files
- All new starters, other than those who have registered for the continuous updating service (see below), will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be initiated before the member of staff commences work in the preschool and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear. Further to this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log or change the nappy of any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check unless fully supervised and after a period of time deemed suitable by the manager.
- The manager will record and retain details about the individual including staff qualifications, identity checks carried out and the vetting process completed. This will include the criminal records disclosure reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it. The preschool will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken
- There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis and at the manager's discretion taking into account the following:
  - seriousness of the offence or other information
  - accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form
  - nature of the appointment including levels of supervision
  - age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information
  - the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information
  - relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with children

- If the individual has registered on the DBS system since 17 July 2013 managers may use the update service with the candidate's permission instead of carrying out an enhanced DBS check
- New starters are required to sign a separate form to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so; and that, to the best of their knowledge, no-one living in their household has been disqualified from working with children
- All new members of staff will undergo an intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the preschool policies and procedures and be assigned a mentor who will introduce them to the way in which the preschool operates
- During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, equality policy and health and safety issues
- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager and their mentor during their induction period to discuss their progress.

### Delayed DBS checks

- Where possible, staff will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. As long as the DBS check has been applied for, if there are delays in the results coming through, staff may work in the preschool before these checks are completed as a last resort, but they must be supervised at all times by staff who already hold an enhanced check. All Preschool staff will be informed of any staff awaiting enhanced DBS clearance.
- Staff awaiting these checks will **never**:
  - Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children
  - Take children for toilet visits unless supervised by staff holding an enhanced check
  - Change nappies
  - Be left alone in a room or outside with children
  - Administer medication
  - Administer first aid
  - Take photographs of any children
  - Be involved in looking at a child's learning and development log, but can contribute to it
  - Have access to children's personal details and records.
- While adhering to the above list, we recognise that it is vital that the staff member awaiting an enhanced disclosure is made to feel part of the team and we support them in participating fully in every other aspect of the preschool day.

### On going support and checks

- All staff are responsible for notifying the manager in person if any there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children (staff suitability status will also be checked through an annual 'staff suitability questionnaire'). This includes any incidents occurring outside the preschool or involving people they live in a household with. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager with **immediate effect**
- The preschool manager will review any significant changes to an individual's circumstances that may suggest they are no longer suitable to work with children and take appropriate action to ensure any unsuitable or potentially unsuitable employee does not have unsupervised contact with children until the matter is resolved. This may include requiring the individual to obtain a waiver from Ofsted in relation to any disqualification. Please see the Disciplinary Policy for further details
- Every member of staff will have three meetings a year with the manager: a formal appraisal, professional discussion to review appraisal and a more informal review. The preschool operates an open door policy. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following six months as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous six months

- The manager, deputy and room leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback
- The preschool will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

This policy was adopted on	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023
Signed on behalf of the Pre school	Julie Russell
Date disseminated to staff	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023
Date for review	September 2024



Downside Pre-School